

conf.
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flange 42 and run in the longitudinal direction of the stiffening member 32. The connecting device 70 of the stiffening member 36 consists of a cylindrical catch protuberance 78 which is complementary to each of the catch recesses 72, 74, 76, likewise extends in the longitudinal direction of the stiffening member 36 and is integrally formed on the base section 58 via a connecting web 80 perpendicular to the base section 58 of the stiffening member 36. --.

Please delete the paragraph on Page 10, Line 25, and insert instead:

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-- In an exemplary embodiment which is not illustrated, instead of the catch protuberance and catch recess hooks curved in the shape of a quarter circle and correspondingly shaped recesses may be employed, ensuring a more secure connection of neighbouring covering parts. --.

REMARKS

Initially, the Examiner has objected to Claims 5-12 as being multiple dependent claims that depend from other multiple dependent claims. Additionally, the Examiner has objected to the abstract, and certain portions of the specification based on some minor informalities. Applicant has amended the claims to correct for the multiple dependencies, and has amended the specification and abstract so as to correct any remaining informalities. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the Examiner's objections have been overcome.

Applicant notes that the Examiner stated that the objection to the abstract was based, in part, on the inclusion of the legal terminology "means" within the abstract. Applicant was unable to locate the cited language of the Examiner, but made several other corrections within the abstract anyway. Applicant hopes that the amendments will be sufficient to satisfy the Examiner's objections.

The Examiner rejected Claims 3 and 4 of the present application under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner noted that Claim 3 recited the element “its,” which is vague and indefinite. Applicant has amended Claim 3, and, as will be discussed below, deleted Claim 4 from the application. Therefore, Applicant submits that the Examiner’s rejection has been overcome.

Substantively, the Examiner has rejected Claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), based on the contention that they are unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,298,626, issued to Rudden (Rudden ‘626), in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,771,271, issued to Keel (Keel ‘271). Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner’s rejections. Solely to expedite the prosecution of the application, Applicant has amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of former Claims 4 and 11, and subsequently deleted Claims 4 and 11. As will be explained below, the presently amended Claim 1 is not taught, disclosed or suggested by any of the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination with one another.

Claim 1 of the present application was amended to specify that the connecting devices have at least one catch projection and catch recesses complementary to the catch projection so that the relative positions of neighboring covering parts can be varied with respect to one another. Such a configuration is not taught, disclosed or suggested by any prior art references, including both Rudden ‘626 and Keel ‘271. In fact, the idea of developing a covering arrangement for a building in which the covering parts do not need to be cut at the top or bottom of the building is not shown at all. As such, Applicant submits that Claim 1 should now be in patentable form as written.

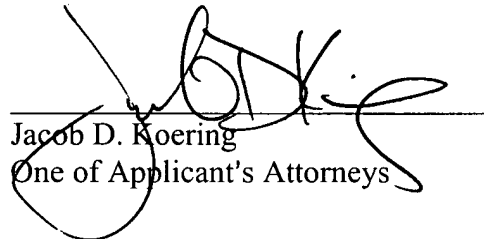
Based on the above, Applicant submits that Claim 1 should now be in allowable form. Additionally, the remaining claims, namely Claims 2-3, 5-10, and 12, all depend from Claim 1, and should therefore also be in allowable condition. Therefore, reconsideration and passage to allowance of Claims 1-3, 5-10 and 12 is respectfully requested.

Should anything further be required, a telephone call to the undersigned at (312) 226-1818 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

FACTOR & PARTNERS, LLC

Dated: February 26, 2003



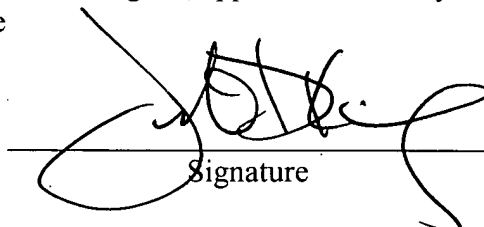
Jacob D. Koering
One of Applicant's Attorneys

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Patent Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on February 26, 2003.

Jacob D. Koering

Name of Applicant, assignee, applicant's attorney or Registered Representative



Signature

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES

1. A covering arrangement for a building, the arrangement having parallel elongate supports and, arranged on the supports, covering parts which

- a) comprise a core and, connected thereto, upper and lower planar covering elements in the manner of a sandwich,
- b) have an elongate, striplike form,
- c) in the installed positing are arranged transversely to the supports and extend at least from one support to a neighbouring support,

wherein

- d) a longitudinal border region (30) of a covering part (16) has a connecting device (68) and the opposite longitudinal border region (34) of a neighbouring covering part (16) has a connecting device (70) complementary thereto by means of which the two covering parts (16) are firmly connected to each other;
- e) the connecting devices (68, 70) comprise at least one catch projection (78) and a catch recess (72, 74, 76) complementary thereto such that
- f) the relative position of the covering part (16) with respect to a neighbouring covering part (16) can be varied.

3. A covering part for use in a covering arrangement as claimed in [one of claims] claim 1 [and 2], which

- a) comprises a core and, connected thereto, upper and lower planar covering elements in the manner of a sandwich, and

b) has an elongate, striplike form,

wherein

c) [its] one longitudinal border region (30) has a connecting device (68) and [its] the opposite longitudinal border region (34) has a connecting device (70) complementary thereto, such that the covering part (16) can be firmly connected to an identical covering part (16) at, in the installed position, mutually facing longitudinal border regions (30, 34).

5. A covering part as claimed in [one of claims] claim 2 [and 3], wherein the two connecting devices (68, 70) in the installed position cooperate in the manner of a hinge, the pivot axis ^{AB} running substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the covering part (16).

6. A covering part as claimed in [one of claims] claim 2 [to 5], wherein at least one of the connecting devices (68, 70) is integrated into a stiffening member (32, 36) arranged in the region of the corresponding longitudinal border region (30, 34) of said covering part.

7. A covering part as claimed in [one of claims] claim 2 [to 6], wherein the connecting devices (68, 70) each extend over ¹¹²its entire length.

8. A covering part as claimed in [one of claims] claim 2 [to 7], wherein the connecting devices (68, 70) are designed in such a way that, in the installed position, the mutually facing longitudinal border regions (30, 34) of neighbouring covering parts (16) at least regionally overlap.

10. A covering part as claimed in [one of claims] claim 2 [and 9], wherein one of ^{its} longitudinal borders (30) is drawn up. ₁₁₂

12. A covering part as claimed in [one of claims] claim 2 [to 11], wherein the connecting device (68) can be connected to a snow fence (102) ^{and/or} a ladder and/or steps and/or a flashing. ₁₁₂

*claimed
sub. matter
must be
shown in the
drawing*

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES

Please delete the paragraph on Page 18, Line 3, and insert instead:

- - A covering arrangement [(10)] for a building has parallel elongate supports [(14)] and covering parts [(16)] arranged thereon. The covering parts [comprise] include a core [(22)] and, connected thereto, upper covering elements [(24)] and lower planar covering elements [(26)], with the result that a sandwich is formed. The covering parts [(16)] furthermore have an elongate, striplike form and in the installed position are arranged transversely to supports [(14)], extending at least from one support [(14)] to a neighbouring support (14). In order to increase the resistance to wind loads, it is proposed that a longitudinal border region [(30)] of a covering part (16) [comprises] include a connecting device [(68)] and the opposite longitudinal border region [(34)] of a neighbouring covering part [(16)] has a connecting device [(70)] complementary thereto, by means of which the two covering parts [(16)] are firmly connected to each other. - -

Please delete the paragraph on Page 9, Line 17, and insert instead:

-- The two stiffening members 32 and 36 each have mutually complementary connecting devices 68 and 70, by which the parts 16 can be connected to each [another] other. The connecting device 68 provided on the stiffening member 32 consists of three cylindrical and mutually identical catch recesses 72, 74 and 76 which are formed one beside the other in the upper side of the upper flange 42 and run in the longitudinal direction of the stiffening member 32. The connecting device 70 of the stiffening member 36 consists of a cylindrical catch protuberance 78 which is complementary to each of the catch recesses 72, 74, 76, likewise extends in the longitudinal direction of the stiffening member 36 and is integrally formed on the base section 58 via a connecting web 80 perpendicular to the base section 58 of the stiffening member 36. --.

Please delete the paragraph on Page 10, Line 25, and insert instead:

-- In an exemplary embodiment which is not illustrated, instead of the catch protuberance[s] and catch recess[es] hooks curved in the shape of a quarter circle and correspondingly shaped recesses may be employed, ensuring a more secure connection of neighbouring covering parts.--.